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PRIORITY

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STATE

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TOR: 040339Z APR 84

PP RUEAIIB  
ZNY CCCCC ZOC STATE ZZH  
UTS4976  
PP RUEHC  
DE RUEHMP #2848 0950334  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 040334Z APR 84  
FM AMCONSUL KARACHI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1902  
INFO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 4955  
RUEHILL/AMCONSUL LAHORE 0267  
BT  
CONFIDENTIAL KARACHI 02848

STAT

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: SHLM, PK  
SUBJECT: RASUL BAKSH PALLEJO: SENATOR MOYNIHAN

REF: (A) STATE 94335  
- (B) 83 KARACHI 8929

1. (C) ENTIRE TEXT.

2. RASUL BAKSH PALLEJO, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE PAKISTAN AWAMI TEHRIQ (PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT) IS PRESENTLY BEING DETAINED IN LANDI JAIL, ABOUT 15 MILES FROM KARACHI. PALLEJO WAS TRANSFERRED THERE ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO AFTER REPORTS OF HIS DETERIORATING HEALTH APPEARED WHILE HE WAS IN CUSTODY IN LAHORE PRISON. PALLEJO WAS TREATED BRIEFLY IN A LAHORE HOSPITAL BEFORE BEING SENT TO LANDI. THE LATTER IS A JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER IN WHICH A NUMBER OF MRD POLITICAL ACTIVISTS ARE INCARCERATED.

3. PALLEJO, IN HIS LATE 50'S, IS A LAWYER FROM THATTA DISTRICT IN SIND. A LEFTIST, HE IS BETTER KNOWN FOR HIS ASSOCIATION WITH THE SINDHI AWAMI TEHRIQ (SAT), WHICH HE FOUNDED IN THE 1960S AND WHICH PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE DURING THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE CAMPAIGN IN RURAL SIND (REF B). PALLEJO'S REPUTATION AS A MARXIST SINDHI NATIONALIST REPORTEDLY PERSUADED HIM TO ESTABLISH THE PAT IN ORDER TO DISARM ALLEGATIONS THAT HE FAVORED SIND'S SECESSION FROM PAKISTAN. LONG A CONTROVERSIAL FIGURE, PALLEJO WAS IMPRISONED FOR A TIME DURING THE AYUB KHAN AND BHUTTO PERIODS AS WELL AS BY THE ZIA REGIME. HE WAS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY IN EARLY 1981 REPORTEDLY AFTER DELIVERING AN ANTI-GOVERNMENT SPEECH AND CONVICTED UNDER MARTIAL LAW REGULATION 12 (PROHIBITING ANTI-STATE ACTIVITIES). PALLEJO WAS SENTENCED TO ONE YEAR'S RIGOROUS IMPRISONMENT (RI) AND A RS. 30,000 FINE. AFTER COMPLETING THE ONE YEAR SENTENCE AND AN ADDITIONAL SIX MONTHS FOR NON-PAYMENT OF THE FINE, PALLEJO WAS FURTHER DETAINED FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD.

4. PALLEJO'S POOR HEALTH HAS PROMPTED A SUSTAINED CAMPAIGN BY THE MEDIA, INTELLECTUALS, AND LEFTIST SYMPATHIZERS TO SECURE HIS RELEASE ON HUMANITARIAN

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GROUND AND THERE HAS BEEN SOME PRESS SPECULATION  
THAT HE MAY BE PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST. THERE  
IS NO SIGN, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOP IS PREPARED TO  
FREE PALLEJO IN THE NEAR FUTURE. TO THE BEST OF  
OUR INFORMATION, PALLEJO'S HEALTH PROBLEMS ARE  
CHRONIC-BASICALLY ASTHMA-BUT NOT LIFE THREATENING.  
THIBAUT  
END OF MESSAGE

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